

# **Teacher – Student Relationship as a Determinant of Students’ Classroom Participation in some Secondary Schools in Kumba I Municipality**

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## **Abstract**

*The study investigates the Effect of Teacher- Student Relationship on Students’ Classroom Participation in the Kumba I Municipality. The descriptive survey research design was used to collect data. Four research objectives were formulated to guide this study. The target population for the study comprised three secondary schools. (one government, one confessional and one lay private) and a sample of 160 students purposively selected from them. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire which comprised of closed ended questions. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics that is tables and frequencies. The findings revealed that all the variables exploited by the study (communication, emotionally- safe learning environment, student perception of teachers, motivation and praise) all have the potential of affecting students’ classroom participation in secondary schools in Kumba Municipality. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: Teachers are advised to routinely show positive attitudes, beliefs and expectations that will motivate students, build a cordial relationship with their students, and students are encouraged to feel free to express their problems especially academic problems to their teachers.*

**Keywords:** student-teacher relationship, classroom participation, communication, emotionally safe environment, perception, motivation

## **1. Introduction**

Teachers have an important role in building students and the relationship they develop with the students determines their academic and personal growth (Good man, 2001). Teacher- student relationship could be develop by encouraging a learning environment where the students are free to ask whatever they want to and the teacher responds in a manner which is understandable by the student. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that the building block of a strong teacher –student relationship is effective communication (Moore, 2003). Positive teacher-student relationship is characterized by mutual acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect care and cooperation between the teacher and the student (Jerome & Pianta, 2008). Open communication as well as emotional and academic support that exist between teachers and students is another way to describe a positive relationship between teachers and students.

Every educational institution needs to be conscious of the fact that, academic achievement, student's behavior and participation are influenced by the teacher-student relationship. The more the teacher connects or communicates with his or her students, the more likely they will be able to help students learn at a high level and accomplish quickly (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004). By building positive relationship with students, it would provide motivation, initiative and engagement which are essential for success. On the contrary, if students realize that their teacher is not friendly learning would not take place effectively.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Historically, the idea of teacher- student relationship started in 1995 by Mann who holds that “the aptness to teach involves the power of perceiving how far a scholar understands the subject matter to be learned and what, in the natural order is the next step to take”. According to him, the teacher must be intuitive and lead the minds of his pupils to discover what they need to know and then supply them with what they require.

Dewey (2003) is of the opinion that as an educator, you need to be able to discern what attitudes are conducive to continued growth and what are detrimental, and use that relational knowledge to build worthwhile educational experiences for students. He writes that “teachers are the agents through which knowledge and skills are communicated and rules of conduct enforced” and as such, it is the duty of the teacher to know how to “utilize the surroundings, physical and social, so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute” to building up worthwhile educational experiences . He says that “all human experience is ultimately social: that it involves contact and communication”. Dewey believed the goal of educators is to create lifelong learners. This is accomplished through the knowledge the educator has of individuals that leads to social organizations providing all students with the opportunity to contribute to something.

Sarason (1999) looks at teaching as a performing art, and discusses the “art of teaching” and the role that teacher interaction plays in creating a “productive learning” environment. He posits that, post - World War II, when training teachers, education has increasingly focused on subject matter to the detriment of pedagogy “the obligation of the teacher to know who the learner is and make the subject matter interesting, motivating, and compelling for their students’ ”. He asks “are there not characteristics of a good teacher which can be observed in which the teacher interacts with children?” Such a candidate would be someone capable of Understanding, motivating, and guiding the intellectual, as well as the social-personal development of children.

Race to the Top initiatives have strongly focused on measuring teacher- student relationship in test scores of students. However, there is a large body of research that examines the value of a teacher's effective outcome when it comes to a teacher's student relationship (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004). An approach to accountability that includes a broader range of measurement of effective classroom instructional practices should include the relationship the teacher builds with her/his Students. Marzano (2003), studied the practices of effective teachers and determined that “an effective teacher-student relationship may be the keystone that allows the other aspects to work well”.

The relationship that teachers develop with their students has an important role in a students' academic growth. Hallinan (2008) writes “Learning is a process that involves cognitive and social psychological

dimensions, and both processes should be considered if academic achievement is to be maximized". Good teacher-student relationships can positively impact student behaviors in the classroom. The learning environment plays a significant role in developing a student's motivation to learn, and positive relationships can help maintain student interest and active engagement in learning.

On the other hand, if the foundation for a good relationship is lacking, it will negatively impact student behaviors. Students will resist rules and procedures, and they will neither trust teachers nor listen to what they have to say if they sense teachers do not value or respect them.

Furthermore, students who have positive relationship with teachers are less likely to avoid school (Kaufman & Sandilos, 2012). Experiencing a sense of belonging greatly contributes to developing positive relationships and positive behaviors. The nature of teacher and student interactions shape the quality of the relationships; teachers tend to have more negative Interactions with students who are peer rejected or less academically and behaviorally competent. Unfortunately, this interaction do not only impacts the relationship that the teacher has with the student, but it also affects the way the student's peers view him; this negative interaction can influence other classroom relationships (Jerome &Pianta, 2008, ). In order to correct this, teachers need to be more cognizant of their interactions and the influence they have on students. Teachers should be aware that positive relationship predict school adjustment and may serve as a defensive factor for children at high risk of poor school and development outcomes (Lander, 2009). Taking time to build positive relationship with students can have profound effects on that child's school experiences both within and outside of the classroom.

Research suggests that good teacher-student relationships are important for maintaining students' interests and academic participation in learning. As previously stated, students who have more positive relationships with their teachers have better achievement outcomes. The inverse is also true, negative teacher-student relationship correspond to worse student outcomes. One study found that teacher-student conflict was consistently related to lower grades. Therefore, it is essential that teachers consider the nature of the work itself. When academic activities are interesting,

Challenging, fun, and relevant to the lives of students, students will want to put forth more effort and engage in these activities. Student choice also allows students to tailor activities to their own interests—project-based learning is significantly more effective in increasing intrinsic motivation than drills and worksheets (Skinner & Greene, 2008).

Student's motivation to learn and receive an education drives their thoughts and actions. This motivation plays an important role in their efforts to learn, perform, and behave. It is no surprise then that students' educational expectations and perceptions of experiences are important influences on their decision to drop out. With more than 16,000 students in their study, Fan and Walters (2014) found that student perceptions and expectations greatly influenced student participation with strong correlation between perceived ability and actual participation in school. Therefore, student beliefs and perceptions of their abilities play a key role in their intrinsic value and decision-making. Positive teacher-student relationships are fundamental.

Conceptually, Cooper (2001) is of the opinion that, if teachers take the time to build relationship they can motivate their student's to learn. He also suggests that teachers need to have a strong belief that building relationships are important to the motivation process. There is a need to capitalize on these beliefs for the child's benefit. It is important that educators recognize the impact they have on their students, and consider

strongly their students' perceptions of them (Eschenmann, 1991). Teachers have to ensure that they are meeting student needs, both academically and emotionally. Creating classroom environments that promote positive cultures with healthy interactions can motivate students to channel their energies and desires to reach their goals.

According to Whitaker (2004), the main variable in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. Great teachers have high expectations for their student's, but even higher expectations for themselves. These teachers recognize the importance of connecting with their students, that if they are unable to connect with them emotionally then influencing their minds may be impossible. Meyer and Turner (2002) demonstrate the importance of Teachers' and Students' emotions during interactions. Their results provide support for further study of the inclusion of interpersonal relationships in the classroom setting and to what degree those relationships affect the students' learning environment. The quality of the relationship between a student and the teacher will result in a greater degree of learning in the classroom.

Theoretically, there exist several theories which can be used to explain the concept of teacher student relationship. This includes the theory of Social learning theory by Albert Bandura which emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. The Attachment theory by John Bowlby, this theory is one which the learner needs the social, emotional and at times even physical support of a primary care giver. The social constructivism theory by Lev Vygotsky which sees learning environment as a mini society, community of learners engaged in activity, interpretation, justification and reflection and Maslow hierarchy of needs.

Contextually, good teaching involves good communication between the teacher and students. The best productivity in a classroom comes from effective co-operation between the teacher and the student. A supportive teacher is one who creates efficiently a positive classroom environment, who encourages students to behave well in the classroom and to be motivated. Supportive teachers also are teachers who emphasize the learning process by giving all the students the chance to construct their learning, and be engaged with the content. To give the students the chance to build knowledge and develop skills, teachers should shift from a traditional teaching method to learning.

Tambo (2003) is of the opinion that although the leader is the dominant figure in the classroom he/she needs order to maintain a positive relationship with learners. Those teachers who demonstrate respect towards their students automatically win favors by having active learners in the class room. The results of this study will go a long way to improve the relationship between the teachers and the students which is a precondition for productive and learning.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

It is believed that with strong or positive student teacher relationship, classroom participation will increase. But from observation, there is poor teacher-student relation. This is due to inconsistent communication between the teacher and students, lack of mutual respect, lack of trust, care and feedback about student behaviors are not given. . These make students not to ask or answer questions in class since the teaching learning environment is not conducive for the learners. Again teachers rarely motivate and praise students for a job well done in the classroom. All these hinder learning negatively as many students will dropout from school, have low self-esteem, come to school late, do not attend classes and negative expectations

about their future. It is because of this backdrop that the researcher is out to investigate the effect of teacher student relationship on students' classroom participation in some secondary schools in Kumba I municipality.

### **1.3 Specific Objectives**

This study seeks;

- To investigate the effect of communication and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality.
- To find out the effect of emotionally safe learning environment and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality
- To investigate the effect of students' perception of the teacher and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality
- To find out how motivation and praise influence classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality

### **1.4 Specific research questions**

- ✓ To what extent does communication influence classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality?
- ✓ How does emotionally safe learning environment influence classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality?
- ✓ To what extent does students' perception of the teacher influence classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality?
- ✓ How does motivation and praise influence classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality?

### **1.5 Specific research hypothesis**

- **H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between communication and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality.
- **H<sub>a1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between communication and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality.
- **H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship emotionally safe learning environment and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality
- **H<sub>a2</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between emotionally safe learning environment and classroom of students in Kumba I Municipality
- **H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between students' perception of the teacher and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality.
- **H<sub>a3</sub>:** There is a significant relationship students' perception of the teacher and classroom participation on students in Kumba I Municipality.
- **H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between motivation and praise and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality

- **Ha4:** There is a significant relationship between motivation and praise and classroom participation of students in Kumba I Municipality.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The sample for this study was 160 form five students purposively selected from three randomly selected secondary schools in Kumba Municipality including 90 students from Government Bilingual High School Kumba, 40 students from Marin Luther King’s Academy Kumba and 30 students from Saint John College, Kumba. A questionnaire made up of 42 closed ended items was used to measure the dependent variable – student classroom participation. The questionnaire was constructed using the Likert scale which has response options strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) from which the respondents will be asked to check the options according to their level of agreement or disagreement. Where SA=4, A=3, D=2, and SD=1. This questionnaire was pilot tested on 10 students to check for consistency. These students were excluded from the final study. From this some corrections were made and the final questionnaire was administered to the students directly by the researcher.

## 3. Results and Discussion

For this study, about an average (50.6%) of the respondents selected for the study were females while 49.4% of them were males. Thus there were more females than males respondents. Regarding class enrolment, 78.7% of the respondents learn in classrooms with more than 40 students while 21.3% of them learn in classrooms with students ranging 21-40. This is an indication that most of the classrooms that were involved in the study are overcrowded.

### 3.1 Specific Research Question one

The first research question which addressed the relationship between classroom communication and students’ participation in class was investigated using seven questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to find out whether communication has a significant relation with students’ participation in class. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 1 below:

Table 1: Distribution of responses on teacher’s communication and class participation (N=160)

School Type	Number of respondents	of Number of items	Mean Opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	88	7	2.77	60.3	39.7
Confessional	30	7	3.06	74.8	25.2
Lay Private	42	7	2.83	67.1	32.9
All	160	7	2.89	67.4	32.6
Critical mean opinion			2.50		



The results showed that about two-thirds (67.4%) of the respondents generally agreed (mean=2.89) that classroom communication affects their ability to participate in class while about one-third (32.6%) of them disagreed. This opinion is comparatively most profound in confessional schools (74.8%), meaning that their teachers communicate more effectively. The agreement in public and lay private schools is respectively 60.3% and 67.1%. This is an indication that 32.6% of the students in the study do not actively participate in class due to the way the teacher communicates.

**3.1.1 Verification of Hypothesis One**

There is no significant relationship between classroom communication and students’ participation in secondary school in the Kumba Municipality. The independent variable in this hypothesis is communication while the dependent variable is class participation. The scores of the independent variable were obtained from the eight questionnaire items that sought to measure classroom communication while the scores of the dependent variable were obtained from the scores of the eight items that were designed to measure class participation. The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis calculated using the formula below

$$\Gamma_{xy} = \frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2 \sum (y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Where x is the independent variable, y is the dependent variable and  $\Gamma_{xy}$  is the correlation coefficient for x and y. The result of this analysis is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of classroom communication and class participation in secondary schools in Kumba Municipality (N=160)

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
Communication	3208	10291246			10798128	0.346**
Class Participation			3366	11329956		

P\* < 0.05; df=160; critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$  = 0.159

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.346 is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.159 at .05 level of significance with 160 degrees of freedom. With the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained.

This result therefore means that there is a significant relationship between teacher’s communication and students’ active participation in class in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality. Since there is a significant relationship between communication and classroom participation, a further exploration of the result showed that the  $\Gamma_{xy}$  = 0.346 was positive and high. This indicates that the more teachers communicate effectively, the more active their students will participate in class.

The findings of this study is supported by Petrie (2011), who is of the opinion that a strong with relationship leads to effective communication which leads to enthusiastic students eager to learn. Effective communication helps people learn easier, strengthen the relationship between the teacher and the learner, and creates a positive atmosphere for learning. All aspects of communication, including non-verbal communication, attentive listening, interactive relationship, asking and answering questions and communication in groups have a crucial part in effective communication with young learners.

This is in line with Social Constructivist theory of Lev Vygotsky’s which states that interacting with others is an important key in the learning process because human minds develop through their interaction with society. Since learners’ involvement is emphasized in the constructivism, the teachers must engage students in learning, and bring their students’ current understanding to the forefront.

**3.2 Specific Research Question Two**

The second specific research question investigated whether the classrooms in secondary in Kumba are emotionally safe and the effect of this on students’ ability to actively participate in class. This question was investigated using nine questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to either agree or disagree with the fact that an emotionally safe environment affects students’ participation. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 3 below:

Table 3: Distribution of responses on the emotionally safe classroom and class participation (N=160)

School Type	Number of respondents	Number of items	Mean Opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	88	9	2.74	63.1	36.9
Confessional	30	9	2.75	63.3	36.7
Lay Private	42	9	2.96	69.3	30.7
All	160	9	2.82	65.2	34.8
Critical mean opinion			2.50		

The result in table 3 shows that 65.2% of all the respondents generally agree (mean=2.82) that their classroom environments are emotionally safe while 34.8% of them disagree. This opinion is comparatively most profound in lay private schools (69.3%), meaning that classrooms in lay private schools are more emotionally safe they are in public schools (63.1%) and confessional schools (63.3%). This is an indication that 34.8% of the students in the study believe that their classrooms are not emotionally safe leading to less active participation in class.

**3.2.1 Verification of Hypothesis two**

There is no significant relationship between an emotionally safe learning environment and students’ participation in class in secondary schools in the Kumba municipality

The independent variable in this hypothesis is emotionally safe environment while the dependent variable is classroom participation. The scores of the independent variable were obtained from the nine questionnaire items that sought to measure emotional safety meanwhile the scores of the dependent variable



were obtained from the scores of the items that measured class participation. The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis. The result of this analysis is presented in table 4 below.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of emotionally safe learning environment and students’ classroom participation (N=160)

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
Emotionally Safe Environment	3509	12313081			24233154	0.482**
Class Participation			6906	47692836		

$p^* < 0.05$ ;  $df = 160$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy} = 0.159$

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.482 is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.159 at .05 level of significance with 160 degrees of freedom. With the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained. This result therefore means that there is a significant relationship between an emotionally safe classroom environment and students’ classroom participation in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality. A further exploration of the result shows that  $\Gamma_{xy}$  calculated was high and positive. This means that the more emotionally safe the classroom environment is, the more actively students will participate in class.

This is in line with Nelson (2003), who said a good and supportive relationship is needed to create safe environments and give students confidence to work without pressure and become motivated to learn. Specifically, when students are exposed to positive emotional stimuli, they are better able to recall newly learned information.

Again Branford (2000), suggested that if teachers take time to build interactive relationship based on respect, trust, caring, and cohesiveness, learners will be engaged in the learning process. Thus, the teacher’s role is vital to the effect of the classroom participation.

This finding is also in line with the attachment theory which stresses on the supportive relationship between the teacher and the student in the classroom. When students feel that their teachers are supportive, trustworthy people, they tend to create a connection with their teacher and start to see their teachers as someone who is there to protect them and give them all the chance to enhance their learning and in the same time behave well. A teacher, who cares about their students, transmits knowledge affectively and has a good interaction with them as he/she also provides the students the opportunity to create an emotional link. On the other hand when the environment is unsafe or not friendly this will hinder classroom participation as learners will not be able to engage in classroom activities because their classroom is not conducive for learning. As such, learners will not be able to express their themselves in the classroom hence hindering classroom participation.

**3.3 Specific Research Question Three**

The third specific research question investigated the extent to which students’ perception of the teacher affect their participation in classroom activities in secondary schools in the Kumba municipality. This question was investigated using seven questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to the extent to students’ perception of the teacher affect their participation in class. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 5 below:

Table 5: Distribution of responses on students’ perception of the teacher and their class participation (N=160)

School Type	Number of respondents	Number of items	Mean Opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	88	7	2.87	65.5	34.5
Confessional	30	7	2.58	52.6	47.4
Lay Private	42	7	2.75	64.6	25.4
All	160	7	2.73	60.9	39.1
Critical mean opinion			2.50		

The result in table 5 shows that three-fifths (60.9%) of all the respondents generally agree (mean=2.73) that their perception of their teachers affect the way they participate in class while two-fifths (39.1%) of them disagree. This opinion is comparatively not too dissimilar in public and lay private schools (65.5% and 64.6% respectively) and just above average (52.6%) in confessional schools. This is an indication that 39.1% of the students in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality perceive their teachers negatively leading to less active participation in class. Noteworthy is the fact that public schools students perceive their teachers more positively than their peers in private schools.

**3.3.1 Verification of Hypothesis three**

There is no significant relationship students’ perception of the teacher and their participation in class in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is students’ perception of the teacher while the dependent variable is classroom participation. The scores of the independent variable were obtained from the seven questionnaire items that sought to measure perception meanwhile the scores of the dependent variable were obtained from the nine questionnaire items that measured participation in the classroom. The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis. The result of this analysis is presented in table 6 below.

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of students’ perception of the teacher and their classroom participation (N=160)

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
Perception of the Teacher	3111	9678321	21484566	0.430**
Classroom Participation	6906	47692836		

$p^* < 0.05$ ;  $df = 160$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy} = 0.159$

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.430 is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.159 at .05 level of significance with 160 degrees of freedom. With the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained. This result therefore means that there is a significant relationship between students’ perception of the teacher and their classroom participation in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality. This relationship is significant at 0.05 level of significance across all the schools. It therefore means that the more positive students perceive their teachers, the more actively they will participate in class.

This was confirmed by Taylor, (2006) who stated that engaged students display many behaviors inside and outside of the classroom that reflect their interest and engagement in learning. They often have the opportunity to feel comfortable discussing their problems with their teachers, show appropriate emotional and social behavior in the classroom, verbally contribute during interest and engagement discussions and ask questions of instructors. A good and efficient classroom management is important to set up the rules, manage time and space in order to give students all the conditions and support to be and feel engaged in the learning process. A good classroom management allows the students to behave well and be motivated and focused enhancing their interaction with the whole class.

This is in line with Bandura theory which stresses that Observation plays a significant role to enhance Self-efficacy. This implies that when students model their teachers they will perceive their teachers positively or negatively which promotes their participation in the class. Teachers must provide difficult task to students which can be achieved with effort, and hard work. In addition to teachers’ guidance, such students recognize the importance of effort and persistence for learning and achieving a goal by developing self-efficacy. Teachers must provide difficult task to students which can be achieved with effort, and hard work.

**3.4 Specific Research Question Four**

The last specific research question investigated the extent to which praise and motivation affects students classroom participation in secondary schools in Kumba. This question was investigated using six questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to either agree or disagree with the fact praise and motivation is an important factor in active class participation. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 7 below:

Table 7: Distribution of responses on the extent to which praise and motivation affect students classroom participation (N=160)

School Type	Number of respondents	Number of items	Mean Opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	88	6	2.78	61.5	38.5
Confessional	30	6	2.33	44.4	55.6
Lay Private	42	6	2.68	63.1	26.9
All	160	6	2.60	56.3	43.7
Critical mean opinion			2.50		

The result in table 7 shows that 56.3% of all the respondents generally agree (mean=2.60) that praise and motivation affects the way they participate in class 43.7% of them disagree.

This opinion is comparatively most profound in lay private schools (63.1%) and 61.5% in public schools. Students of confessional schools by their majority (55.6%) think that praise and motivation does not affect whether or not they participate in class. This is an indication that 43.7% of the students in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality do not see praise and motivation as affecting their classroom participation.

### 3.4.1 Verification of Hypothesis four

There is no significant relationship between praise and motivation and students’ classroom participation in secondary schools in the Kumba Municipality.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is motivation and praise while the dependent variable is classroom participation. The scores of the independent variable were obtained from the six questionnaire items that measured praise and motivation meanwhile the scores of the dependent variable were obtained from the from the scores of the items that measured classroom participation. The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis.

Table 8: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the extent to which praise and motivation affects classroom participation (N=160)

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
Praise and Motivation	2563	6568969			17700078	0.587**
Classroom Participation			6906	47692836		

$p < 0.05$ ;  $df = 160$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy} = 0.195$

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.587 is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.159 at .05 level of significance with 160 degrees of freedom. With the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained.

This result therefore means that there is a significant relationship between praise and motivation students classroom participation in secondary schools in Kumba. This relationship is significant at 0.05 level of

significance across all schools. The correlation coefficient of 0.587 is observed not to be sufficiently higher than for the other variables indicating that praise and motivation has the highest influence on students' classroom participation.

This was supported by Goslin, (2016) who stresses that effort is crucial for increasing achievement, motivation and promoting learning. He encourages teachers to give a separate grade for effort. This grade will be based on factors such as participation and homework. An effort grade will reinforce the importance of each individual working to his or her highest potential and teachers should allow students to retake tests and quizzes, revise papers, and re-do assignment.

According to Mendler (2000), students want and need to know if they are being successful in school. He believes that it is important for teachers to give frequent, positive feedback on academics and behavior. Mendler continue that handing back assignments, tests, quizzes and projects within a short amount of time stresses that the assignment is valuable.

This is in line with Maslow hierarchy of needs which is directly related to learning through motivation. In order for students to succeed in the classroom, they must be encourage and praise to learn. When all levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are met, students will be at their full potential to learn.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendation**

The essence of a strong teacher-student relationship revolves around how it affects teaching and learning in the classroom. Each contextual category that was created as a result of this case study includes specific components of the teacher - student relationship that affect the classroom learning environment in a meaningful way as evidenced by student responses to teacher interaction. The actions of this study participant and the result findings of this case study serve to support the contention that everyday interactions in the classroom do matter. Hence this study gains in-depth knowledge of teacher-student interaction that has positive effect on classroom participation.

The researcher recommends the following:

Teachers hold a vital role in any educational institution. As such the type of relationship that exists between teachers and students in secondary school play a great rule in the success of the students.

Students are encouraged to feel free to express their problems especially academic problems to their teachers. Students should not depend on the assumptions that if they talk to their teachers, they might scold them.

Teachers are advised to routinely show positive attitudes, beliefs and expectations that will motivate students. Since it has been proven that the success of students depends on the relationship between the students and the teachers.

The researcher recommends that, students are advised to show respect toward their teachers and show love for their studies. If teachers discover that learners are interested in learning, the teachers should put in more effort to teach them in order to attend their goals at the end with good result.

The finding of this study was limited to secondary schools in Kumba I Municipality. It is suggested that a similar study should be carried out in primary schools. Another suggestion for further study is that,

feedback on students should be given. A similar study should also be carried out in other regions of Cameroon such that conclusions should be drawn on the importance of teacher- student relationship of students' classroom participation.

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